

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/824,943

Applicant(s)

IDE ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Lars A. Olson

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment received from the applicant on June 28, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-16.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 15 April 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

Reasons for Allowance

1. An amendment was received from the applicant on June 28, 2005.
2. Claims 1-16 are allowed.
3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance. The drive shaft support structure for a marine propulsion system as claimed is not shown or suggested in the prior art because of the use of a drive shaft support structure in combination with a marine propulsion system that is comprised of a vertical drive shaft, a gear case that forms a lower part of said marine propulsion system, a vertical drive shaft receiving bore that contains a bearing, and a gear chamber for receiving a bevel gear for transmitting power from a drive shaft to a propeller shaft, said drive shaft support structure being comprised of a bearing-fastening member for holding said bearing in place in said drive shaft receiving bore, and a covering member that is disposed above said bearing-fastening member and closes an upper end of said drive shaft receiving bore in a fluid-tight manner, said covering member having an oil passage that forms a part of a lubricating oil path that extends from said gear chamber through said drive shaft receiving bore to a space between said bearing-fastening member and said covering member, and from said space to an outside of said drive shaft receiving bore through a connecting hole.
4. The prior art as disclosed by Onoue (US 4,917,639) discloses a drive shaft support structure for use in combination with a marine propulsion system, said drive shaft support structure being comprised of a bearing-fastening member for holding a

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bearing in a drive shaft receiving bore, and a covering member that is disposed above said bearing-fastening member in order to close an upper end of said drive shaft receiving bore in a fluid-tight manner. Newly cited reference by Okabe (US 6,814,635) discloses a marine propulsion system with a vertical drive shaft, a bearing, a bearing-fastening member, and a covering member that is disposed above said bearing-fastening member. Newly cited reference by Kameoka (US 6,702,632) discloses a lubrication system for an outboard motor shaft coupling that includes a lubrication passageway that allows delivery of lubricant to a coupling between a crankshaft and a drive shaft. However, none of the prior art cited shows or suggests the use of a drive shaft support structure in combination with a marine propulsion system that is comprised of a vertical drive shaft, a gear case that forms a lower part of said marine propulsion system, a vertical drive shaft receiving bore that contains a bearing, and a gear chamber for receiving a bevel gear for transmitting power from a drive shaft to a propeller shaft, said drive shaft support structure being comprised of a bearing-fastening member for holding said bearing in place in said drive shaft receiving bore, and a covering member that is disposed above said bearing-fastening member and closes an upper end of said drive shaft receiving bore in a fluid-tight manner, said covering member having an oil passage that forms a part of a lubricating oil path that extends from said gear chamber through said drive shaft receiving bore to a space between said bearing-fastening member and said covering member, and from said space to an outside of said drive shaft receiving bore through a connecting hole.

Conclusion

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."
6. Any inquiry concerning this communication from the examiner should be directed to Exr. Lars Olson whose telephone number is (571) 272-6685.

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July 11, 2005

**LARS A. OLSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER**



7/11/05